

## **Changes to the May 2004 MU-1 and MU-2 Drafts**

Since the release of the January 2004 drafts of the proposed MU-1 and MU-2 mixed-use zones, there have been a total of 18 meetings held by Planning Department staff with Neighborhood Coalitions and Associations, developers, and the general public. The May 2004 drafts of the proposed MU-1 and MU-2 mixed-use zones had been under review for nearly five months. Planning Department staff held three meetings (June 24, July 26, September 27) for the general public to comment on the content of the May drafts. On July 26, staff presented a list of proposed changes to the May 2004 drafts and to related proposals for amendments to the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Comprehensive Plan as follows:

### **MU-1 Proposed Changes:**

1. Require application of the MU-1 zone through a Rank 3 Sector Plan process.
2. Reduce the maximum building height from 55 feet to 45 feet.
3. Establish a standard maximum residential density of 72 dwelling units per acre. Delete the 36 du/ac – 2 story stipulation.
4. For new development within a Rank 3 area, a site development plan for building permit is required for review by the EPC. Delete the site plan for subdivision and administrative review process.

### **MU-2 Proposed Changes:**

1. Require application of the MU-2 zone only in a designated Major Activity Center.
2. Allow for no stated maximum residential density for the MU-2.
3. For new development, a site development plan for building permit is required for review by the EPC. Delete the site plan for subdivision and administrative review process.

### **Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments:**

1. 36 dwelling units per acre and higher for Activity Centers and Transit Corridors within the City limits.
2. The previously proposed amendment to increase building scale in Activity Centers by one story for mixed-use development with residential uses within the City limits is withdrawn.

Of the proposed changes for the May MU-1 and MU-2 drafts, the Rank 3 Plan and site plan for building permit requirements were not pursued. The average length of time needed to develop and implement a Rank 3 (Neighborhood or Sector) Plan is 2 to 3 years. This time frame would discourage use of the MU-1 zone and delay the City's attempts to facilitate mixed-use development in our Activity Centers and Transit Corridors as envisioned in our Comprehensive Plan. With site plan review, the investment needed to produce site plans for building permit, together with the uncertainty of outcome for an application for a zone map amendment, also became a disincentive for property owners to pursue the use of these zones for mixed-use development.

Citizens have called for a greater level of detail in site plans in general that would illustrate or otherwise show data that reveals how new development will blend with adjacent existing development, particularly existing neighborhoods. As staff began to develop design criteria for site plans to address these issues, the new criteria were similar to what is currently required for the SU-1 for Planned Residential Development (PRD) zone. The SU-1 PRD zone allows a combination of residential, commercial, and office uses and is essentially a mixed-use zone. An application for a zone map amendment for the SU-1 PRD zone requires a site plan for subdivision that includes site design criteria.

On September 27, a general public meeting was held to review and discuss the September 2004 draft of a proposed zone that would place the PRD, MU-1, and MU-2 zones as categories of mixed-use development under the SU-1 zone designation. The MU-1 category proposed a maximum building height of 45 feet with a maximum residential density of 72 dwelling units per acre, and a depth standard for placement of the zone of one block on Transit Corridors. The MU-2 category proposed a maximum building height of 80 feet and a requirement that the MU-2 be located only in Major Activity Centers. The SU-1 MU-1/MU-2 zone featured additional design criteria that would show proximity information for new development adjacent to existing development, and made all design criteria for the MU-1 and MU-2 mixed-use categories flexible under the SU-1 zone.

Citizens responded to the September 2004 draft with concern regarding language that described the Transit Corridor depth of placement for the MU-1 category, and with concern that there should be a minimum set of required design standards for both the MU-1 and MU-2 categories. Citizens also expressed concern over the lack of a Rank 3 Plan requirement for the MU-1 category, and suggested that property that abuts Transit Corridors under residential zoning should not be eligible for MU-1 placement.

The withdrawal of the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to increase building height for Activity Centers did not draw any comments of concern from citizens. The remaining proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments are designed to allow for residential densities of 36 dwelling units per acre and higher in Activity Centers and Transit Corridors to reflect the density standards of the SU-1 MU-1/MU-2 zones.

These comments have shaped the October 2004 draft of the proposed SU-1 MU-1/MU-2 zones which is released on the City's web site with this document. **The October 2004 draft will be reviewed by the Environmental Planning Commission at a Special Hearing on October 14, 2004 at 4:00 pm in the Plaza del Sol Hearing Room.** If you have any comments on this material prior to the hearing, please contact Makita Hill, Planner, Advance Planning Division, at 924-3879.